

CLAIMS

1/ A method of maintaining communications options within a private communications network involving nodes of the private exchange type, all nodes being capable of communicating with all other nodes in normal operation via two-way communications trunks interconnecting some of the nodes in pairs, the method comprising the steps consisting in:

· detecting faulty operation that leads to the network becoming split; and

· implementing emergency means which provide one or more dynamic accesses for ensuring that all of the nodes of the network can again communicate with all of the other nodes, thereby maintaining a set of services proposed by the network in normal operation;

wherein, once the emergency means have been implemented, the method includes the additional step of transmitting calls through the network using routing that is static and predetermined.

2/ A method of maintaining communications options within a private communications network according to claim 1, the method including the additional step consisting in defining a set of network nodes from which the dynamic accesses are available prior to any faulty operation giving rise to the network being split.

3/ A method of maintaining communications options within a private communications network according to claim 1, wherein the dynamic accesses are implemented only to satisfy a call request between two nodes that can no longer be connected together once the network has split.

4/ A method of maintaining communications options within a private communications network according to claim 1, wherein the static routing defines a single access path between a sending node and a destination node, the single

5/ A method of maintaining communications options within
a private communications network according to claim 1,
the method including the additional step consisting in
releasing the dynamic accesses as soon as the faulty
operation that cause the network to split has ceased and
the last call supported by the dynamic accesses has
finished.

6/ A method of maintaining communications options within a private communications network according to claim 2, wherein the emergency means comprise modems disposed at the nodes defined prior to any faulty operation and from which dynamic accesses are available.

7/ A method of maintaining communications options within
a private communications network according to claim 1,
20 wherein the emergency means make use of Ethernet links.

8/ A method of maintaining communications options within
a private communications network according to claim 1,
wherein the emergency means make use of a B channel on an
25 access of a communications circuit.